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SUBJECT: January 8 MFA Press Briefing: India PM visit, A/S Hill
Travel, Tibet, Human Rights, China-Singapore Relations

1. Key points at the January 8 MFA Press Briefing:

-- Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh will meet with President Hu Jintao, NPC Chairman Wu Bangguo and Premier Wen Jiabao during his January 14-15 visit to China.

-- EAP Assistant Secretary Christopher Hill will meet with VFM Wu Dawei during his January 10-11 trip to Beijing. All parties are continuing "positive communication and coordination" on the issue of Pyongyang's declaration of its nuclear programs.

-- Tibet is an "internal affair" of China. The Dalai Lama always engages in "separatist activities" under the name of religion.

-- The MFA Spokesperson "had not heard" of any plan to dispatch Chinese troops to the DPRK in the event of instability, as reported by an American think tank.

-- Human Rights: Concerning the arrest of activist Hu Jia, "China abides by the rule of law." Some organizations "use the Olympics" to "play up" human rights issues "in violation" of the principles of the Games.

-- Security cooperation between China and Singapore has "developed rapidly."

Indian PM Visit

1.2. At the January 8 regular MFA press briefing, MFA Spokesperson Jiang Yu confirmed that Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh will meet with President Hu Jintao, National People's Congress (NPC) Chairman Wu Bangguo and Premier Wen Jiabao during his January 14-15 visit to China. China attaches great significance to its "strategic partnership" with India, Jiang added. Commenting on bilateral issues between the two countries, Jiang said positive progress has been made on territorial issues and both Beijing and New Delhi are "willing to work together to reach a fair resolution." Regarding the Dalai Lama, Jiang merely said that China hopes the Indian government will "honor its commitments."

Tibet: An Internal Chinese Affair

1.3. In response to a separate question about Tibetans reportedly being forced to sign a petition opposing the Dalai Lama's return, Jiang replied that Tibet is an "internal affair of China." Jiang also accused the Dalai Lama of "always engaging in separatist activities under the name of religion."

A/S Hill Trip to Beijing

1.4. Jiang confirmed that EAP Assistant Secretary Christopher Hill will meet with VFM Wu Dawei during his January 10-11 trip to Beijing. When asked about the DPRK's commitment to make a full declaration of its nuclear programs, Jiang said that all parties are

"continuing positive communication and coordination."

Unaware of Any Plan to Dispatch Troops to DPRK

15. In response to a recent U.S. think tank report claiming that China plans to dispatch troops to North Korea to secure nuclear weapons in the event of instability, Jiang said she had "not heard" of any such plan.

Hu Jia Arrest, Human Rights, Olympics

16. When asked to comment on the recent arrest of activist Hu Jia, Jiang replied that China "abides by the rule of law" and "protects the freedom" of its citizens. Turning to the broader issue of human rights and the Olympic Games, Jiang accused some organizations of "using the Olympics" to "play up" human rights issues "in violation" of the principles of the Games.

China-Singapore Relations

17. A reporter commented that a recent security agreement between China and Singapore has extended China's "reach" into the South China Sea. In reply, Jiang said that in recent years, security cooperation has "developed rapidly" between the two countries. Regarding Singapore Air's bid to buy a stake in China Eastern Airlines, Jiang declined to comment beyond saying that the matter is one of "business cooperation."

Visits

18. Addressing a number of upcoming visits, Jiang said VFM Wang Yi

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will visit South Korea in mid-January as a "special envoy." Vice Premier Zeng Peiyan will attend the 2008 World Economic Forum in Davos later this month. Responding to a ROK media report that former leader of the ROK Grand National Party Park Geun Hye will visit China to meet with President Hu Jintao, Jiang simply said there is "no specific schedule" for the visit.

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